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## Letters to the editor

### CIA has the techniques

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# Freeze verification is doable

To the Editor:

Richard Burt, a senior State Department official, said at a European news conference last week that the Soviets had added 45 warheads to their SS-20 missiles during the past five months. Alexander Haig, just a few days before his departure as secretary of state, described an intricate series of missile test firings that the Soviets had conducted during a two-week period in early June.

In both cases, the purpose of these revelations was publicly to expose Soviet actions as contrary to world peace.

But they also reveal something else that is terribly important: The United States knows, in rather precise detail, what the Soviets are doing. So, while it often is said that we can't trust the Soviets, it seems appropriate to respond: We don't have to. Through technical means, such as satellites, each side can — and does — watch very closely what the other side is doing. Each knows, with confidence, the nuclear capacity of the other side — right down to the number, size and location of warheads. That's significant.

William Colby, former CIA director, made this point on July 1, when he endorsed the proposal for an immediate freeze of the nuclear arms race. Mr. Colby, who knows a great deal about such things, said that a freeze

would pose "no significant danger of undetected Soviet cheating." In fact, he stated that the freeze would make it easier, rather than more difficult, to control Soviet behavior, since it would place clear, unambiguous limits on what they (and we) are permitted to do. As things presently stand, there are no rules — no limits, no treaties — governing the arms race.

While noting that no verification technique ever can be totally foolproof, Mr. Colby stated that to cheat on the freeze agreement, without detection, would be immensely difficult and only temporary. And whatever might be produced through such elaborate deception, he said, would be of only marginal value — certainly not enough significantly to endanger U.S. security, and not worth the damage that eventual exposure surely would bring.

The nuclear arms freeze would require exactly the same thing of both sides: an immediate stop to all new nuclear weapons.

Then, negotiations could focus entirely on how to get rid of the massive overkill that already exists. Verification would, of course, be of great importance, and both sides have the means to verify, with a high degree of confidence, that the other side is complying.

So, where does the freeze proposal stand? The Soviets indicat-

ed a willingness to consider it as a first step in the arms reduction (START) talks which began June 29. The U.S. government has rejected the idea, saying that it is necessary to proceed with our planned nuclear buildup first.

The recent outcry against nuclear arms has demonstrated the enormous power of public opinion. A halt to the arms race can be achieved, but only through individuals — one by one — joining together in responsible protest, gradually becoming a truth-force that cannot be ignored.

Voters in New Jersey (and probably Philadelphia) will have that opportunity this November, when the freeze will appear as a question on their ballots. Others may sign the freeze petition being circulated in churches, shopping centers and other public places.

Some people say that any agreement with the Soviets is too risky and that building more and better nuclear weapons is the only way to be secure. But how and when will that process eventually end? Will there be some safer time than now to stop? The truth is that every path has risks, but none is riskier than the buildup path we presently are on.

To freeze now is the most realistic — and necessary — thing to do.

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Philadelphia.